

A Neighborhood Watch is a group of neighbors who look out for each other's families and property, alert the police to a suspicious person or activity, and report any crime in progress. They work together with the police to make their community a better place to live.

Over 37 MILLION people participated in the 2008 National Night Out - an annual campaign that involves citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations and local officials.



If you would like to start a Neighborhood Watch Group in your area, please contact the Lynchburg Police Department at the location or phone number below.

**LYNCHBURG POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

Crime Prevention Unit
805 Court Street
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Chris Tarbell
Phone: 434-455-6118

Email: christopher.tarbell@lynchburgva.gov

**LYNCHBURG POLICE
DEPARTMENT**



**Neighborhood
Watch
Program**

What is Neighborhood Watch?

Crime and the fear of crime threaten a community's well being. People can become afraid to use the streets, parks, or even sit on their own front porches.

As the law-abiding citizens stay inside out of fear, the criminals are given more opportunity to commit crimes without fear of being reported to the police. You and your neighbors can help your neighborhood become a safer and friendlier place by getting involved in a Neighborhood Watch.

A Neighborhood Watch is one of the most effective and least costly ways to prevent crime! Neighborhood Watch groups are the foundation of crime prevention efforts and can be a stepping stone to community revitalization.

As of 2009, the City of Lynchburg has forty neighborhood watch groups, with varying degrees of activity and involvement.



Neighborhood Watch Basics:

Watch groups are not vigilantes. They are extra eyes and ears for reporting crime to the police.

Any community resident can join -- young and old, single and married, renter and homeowner.

A few concerned residents or a community organization can spearhead the effort to organize a Watch.

Members learn how to make their homes more secure, watch out for each other and the neighborhood, and report suspicious activities to the police. They will also receive training on personal safety, Operation Identification, and other areas of concern. The Police Department will share information on local crime statistics at the meetings.

You can form a Watch group around any geographical unit: a block, apartment, park, business area, or public housing complex.

Neighborhood Watch helps build pride and a sense of camaraderie among the members.

Starting a new Neighborhood Watch Group

A coordinator is the person who initiates contact with the Crime Prevention Unit and is willing to do the work to get a Neighborhood Watch group started.

The coordinator's responsibility is to determine the area or boundaries for the group and distribute meeting announcements to the residents. The coordinator also is responsible for finding an appropriate place to meet and scheduling the date and time with the Community Services Coordinator at the Lynchburg Police Department.

There must be 2 initial meetings for the residents to receive the training on what a Neighborhood Watch is, how it functions, how to report suspicious activity, Operation Identification, establishing a phone tree, selecting block captains, etc. These meetings will each take about 1 ½ hours to complete.

Once the initial meetings have been held, the phone tree is completed, block captains are named, and Operation ID is done, the group is ready to be considered an official Neighborhood Watch. The members also need to agree to meet at least one time per year and participate in *National Night Out Against Crime*.